

DECEMBER 5, 2003

# TALON



## Shaping the future

**Inside this issue:**

**Medal ceremony special for new father**

**Show me the money**

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# TALON

Published in support of  
Operation Joint Forge  
December 5, 2003  
Volume 14, No. 10

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The *Talon* is produced in the interest of the service members of Task Force Eagle. The *Talon* is an Army-funded magazine authorized for members of the U.S. Army overseas under the provisions of AR 360-1. Contents of the *Talon* are not necessarily the official views of, nor endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or Task Force Eagle. The *Talon* is published weekly by the Task Force Eagle Public Affairs Office, Eagle Base, APO AE 09789. DSN Telephone 314-762-0190. Email story ideas, and photo to: [Clinton.Wood@email-tc3.5sigcmd.army.mil](mailto:Clinton.Wood@email-tc3.5sigcmd.army.mil). The Task Force Eagle web address is [www.tfegale.army.mil](http://www.tfegale.army.mil). Printed by PrintComTuzla. Circulation: 3,500.

## Making a difference Soldiers can still donate to CFC

“Giving pays the highest interest rate, and has the longest term of any investment available” - Jeffrey K. Wilson

This quote aptly sums up the theme for this year’s Combined Federal Campaign. Although the campaign concludes on Dec. 10, there is still plenty of time to participate if you wish. After all, it only takes a few minutes to put pen to check and make a world of difference in someone’s life.

What is the CFC? The CFC is a once a year fund drive conducted in the workplace to give federal employees an opportunity to donate to their favorite charities. The Combined Federal Campaign – Overseas, is the same program conducted overseas for the thousands of Americans who live abroad, but who want to contribute and donate to

their local and national charities in the United States. The 2002 CFC-O raised a record-breaking \$11.2 million dollars for people in need. Service members and civilians serving overseas can be justifiably proud of this achievement, one that testifies to America’s tradition of giving to those less fortunate.

Where does the money go? The CFC-O helps raise funds for programs around the world. Some of the programs include, eradicating polio and smallpox, cleaning the environment, rebuilding communities, and helping people displaced by war, famine, and natural disasters.

For soldiers and civilians stationed in MNB (N) who wish to participate in the CFC-O, they may contact their unit S1 or call 1st Lt. Donovan at DSN: 762-2174.



Photo by Spc. Jeremiah Wickenhauser, 135th MPAD

### New baby congratulations

TF Bearcat Command Sgt. Maj. Kelly Booge, (left) and ARNG Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Lever III, congratulate Spc. Mark Hoiland on the birth of his son at Hilltop 1326.



About the cover: Minn. National Guard Adj. Gen. Maj. Gen. Larry Shellito (left) and CNGB Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum discuss the progress of the 34th ID during a visit to FOB Connor. Photo by Sgt. Sarah C. Danielski, 135th MPAD.

# Extra special: Medal ceremony special for new father

Story and photo by  
Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood  
135th MPAD

CAMP CONNOR, BiH – Staff Sgt. Randy Woodward’s pinning of his NATO Non-Article 5 Medal by Multinational Brigade (North) Commander Brig. Gen. Richard Nash Nov. 22 here was extra special.

During the pinning, Nash also congratulated Woodward of Brainerd, Minn., on becoming a father for the fourth time. His wife had delivered his son Carter two days earlier.

“Oh I’m very pumped, very excited,” Woodward of Task Force Bearcat’s C Company, 2nd Battalion, 136th Infantry, said of the childbirth.

Woodward now has three sons and a daughter.

Unlike the Red Cross message delivered to Woodward informing him of the news, he was not surprised that Nash knew of the childbirth. In the formation, Nash and the task force commander, Lt. Col. Gary Olson, first congratulated his younger brother, Bryan, who stood in front of Woodward in the formation.

“Both were

popping their heads around Bryan,” said Woodward, who has been in the Guard for 10 years. “Colonel (Olson) was like we’ll get to you. We’ll find you.”

His wife’s pregnancy wasn’t that smooth. Two months ago, she slipped

*“I talked to my leadership and my soldiers and they helped me get through (the situation).”*

– Staff Sgt.  
Randy Woodward

in a large grocery store in Baxter, Minn., and hit her stomach with her elbow.

Woodward said she went into premature labor but the doctors were able to stop the contractions. She delivered Carter three to four weeks early.

Randy, whose daily task as a squad leader is taking charge of seven soldiers and two humvees, said this accident really “shook him up.”

“I talked to my leadership and my soldiers and they helped me get through (the situation),” he added.

Training at the much larger Eagle Base helped

him “get through” the last week of his wife’s pregnancy. He said he was able to chat and see his wife via the webcams at the base’s cyber café.

Woodward isn’t the only father at FOB Connor with a unique story. Sgt. Robin Mattson’s wife was induced early so he could see his child before leaving for Bosnia; and, Spc. Andrew Burton of Park Rapids, Minn., saw his son for only a few days before leaving for the six-month deployment.

Mattson of Bemidji, Minn., who has been in the Guard for two years, said their doctor recommended the induction, which was only a week prior to his wife’s due date.

“They figured it would help in bonding and everything,” he said.

Mattson, who also has a 2-year-old daughter, said seeing his newborn daughter Stephanie, even if only for only a few days, was nice.

“Any time you get with your children it’s just awesome,” he said.

Burton also saw his newborn son for the first time at about the same time that Mattson saw his newborn daughter. Burton was training in Fort Polk, La., when Kobe was born.

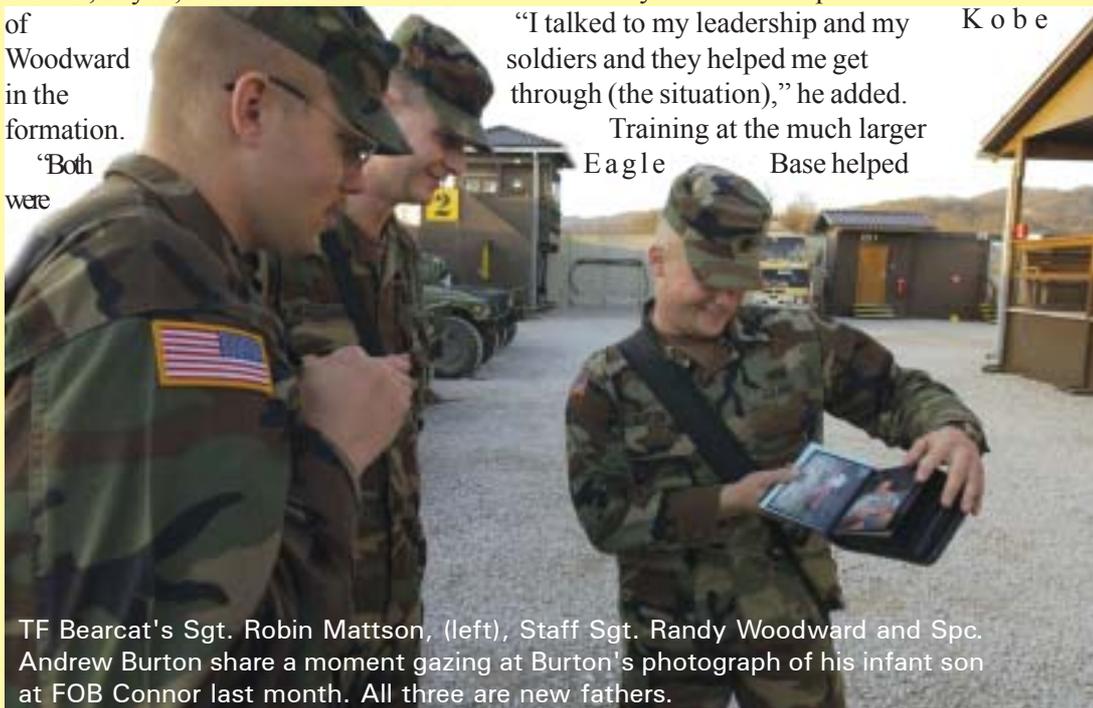
Burton met his son Kobe for the first time when his fiancée brought Kobe

along with her to Fort McCoy, Wis. Burton was training at Fort McCoy before deploying to Bosnia.

He said Kobe was the youngest baby he had ever held.

“I didn’t know if I was going to break him, he was so fragile and tiny.”

Burton also summed up the feelings of every father serving in the Armed Forces away from their families, “I’m excited to get back. Go home and be a father.”



TF Bearcat's Sgt. Robin Mattson, (left), Staff Sgt. Randy Woodward and Spc. Andrew Burton share a moment gazing at Burton's photograph of his infant son at FOB Connor last month. All three are new fathers.

# Guard leadership shows its

## Minn. TAG and NGB chief proud of the 34th I

### 34th ID shaping the future of deployments

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood  
135th MPAD

More than 100 soldiers of Stabilization Force 14, which is mostly composed of Minnesota Army National Guard's 34th Infantry Division, learned last week that they are the "benchmark" of future overseas deployments.

They were told this at a town hall meeting by Maj. Gen. Larry Shellito, adjutant general for the Minnesota National Guard and the 34th Inf. Div., commander.

"I'll tell you, everything I heard about your performance has been just outstanding," Shellito said.



Minnesota National Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Larry Shellito listens to 1st Lt. Gregory Wagner, of TF Bearcat, as he describes missions conducted by Bearcat in the city of Srebrenica.

This veteran schoolteacher, who has served in the Armed Forces for 35 years, also informed his audience of other deployments for Minnesota Guardmembers. They include an air defense battery deploying to Iraq and several hundred armor battalion soldiers deploying to Honduras for at least a year.

Shellito also noted that another state strike was narrowly averted.

"Things are going extremely well in the state of Minnesota," he said.

He commented that he enjoys being the adjutant general, a duty he assumed Nov. 3 after the previous adjutant general's retirement. Shellito was selected from a pool of 31 applicants for the top job in the Minnesota Guard.

"I'm having a ball," he said.

His goals include forming a joint Army and Air Guard headquarters and possibly transforming troops.

"There is not enough infantry," he noted.

For this reason, artillery and air defense units could become infantry or military police units he said.

Shellito also fielded several questions from the audience.

These included junior officer concerns, the possibility of an additional military police company in Minnesota and the Guard's airport security mission.



Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum (left) and Maj. Gen. Larry Shellito tour FOB Connor.

The session ended with a motivational speech from Brig. Gen. Harry A. Sieben, Jr., who celebrated his birthday a day earlier and retired Nov. 30.

Sieben, assistant adjutant general, Minnesota Air National Guard, told the soldiers upon returning to the States, they can tell their family, friends and people that they meet that they saved lives while serving in Bosnia.



# s support

D Story and photos by  
Sgt. Sarah C. Danielski  
135th MPAD

Many things have changed over the past two years in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Soldiers who served as part of Stabilization Force 10, might not even recognize it.

That was the feeling Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, chief, National Guard Bureau, had during a tour of the area Nov. 25. Blum was the Multinational Division (North) commander for SFOR 10, from October 2001 to April 2002. He visited with Task Force Bearcat, 34th Infantry Red Bull Division soldiers and took a tour of Forward Operating Base Connor, Bratunac, Srebrenica and Potocari during his recent trip to the country.

As head of both the Army and Air National Guard, Blum is proud of the work soldiers and airmen do on peacekeeping missions around the world, especially here in BiH.

"I feel very confident that the mission is well suited for the National Guard," Blum said. He said that Guard soldiers tend to do these types

## Then and now: Comparing the progress of SFOR

of missions slightly better than their active duty counterparts because they bring civilian acquired skills and experiences that most active duty soldiers have never had.

"They also tend to be older and have a high maturity level," Blum continued. "They are more up to the complex task of peacekeeping."

Upon arriving at FOB Connor, Blum was shown the facilities, including the weapons storage shed, used for housing weapons collected by presence patrols, or operations such as Active Harvest.

After a short briefing, Blum rode along on a patrol with soldiers of the task force to the cities on the southeastern edge of Bearcat's area of responsibility. Along the way, Blum related his own experiences of SFOR to his tour guides, as well as made comparisons to the way things were when he was in command.

"I'm extremely proud of what the Red Bull has done," said Blum. "This is Ph.D. level soldiering, and the 34th is taking it to a new level." He compared the presence patrols of SFOR 10 and SFOR 14, explaining that the average patrols today deal with quality of life issues, rather than simply building a life, as it did in the past.

"I've seen so many improvements since I was here last," said Blum, "and it all could not have been possible without the hard work of the Red Bull soldiers."

Serving as Blum's



Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum views a memorial at the Srebrenica-Potocari Memorial and Cemetery.

tour guide for the visit, 1st Lt. Gregory Wagner, platoon leader, said it was interesting to hear how much change and progress has been made over the years.

"It was especially interesting to listen to the general's comments about the areas we drove by," he said. Wagner explained that as they drove past some areas Blum made comments about the new buildings and homes that did not exist when Blum was here.

"I think it's good for the past leadership to see how far the county has come since they were here," Wagner said. "Progress is still being made, and it's important for them to know that the country is getting back on its feet."

Many of the soldiers at FOB Connor, including Wagner, thought the visit was encouraging.

"It's great to see the leadership out here," said Wagner. "It lets the troops know that we are important to them."

CNGB Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, Brig. Gen. Harry A. Sieben view one of the weapons collected by TF Bearcat soldiers. Maj. Eric Andringa, JVB, looks on.



# Show me the money

Story and photos by  
Master Sgt. Edwin Holt 135th MPAD



Spc. Shannon Shaver, 147th Fin. Bn., assists Capt. Matthew Staehling, SJA, at Eagle Base last month.

It's a good thing three quarters of the 147th Finance Battalion soldiers have backgrounds in accounting or business and those that don't are highly educated.

The battalion sent 26 of its best soldiers to Bosnia and Herzegovina for Stabilization Force 14. This close band of soldiers is responsible for disbursing and accounting for the flow of approximately \$7 million at any given time.

To keep things extra interesting, the battalion is also using the Defense Finance Accounting Service's new Deployable Dispersing System. It marks the first time DDS has been used for any SFOR rotation and the first time for any operation this large.

"DDS is a very sophisticated

system that allows us to track each transaction and follow disbursements where they go so we can balance our accounts every night to the penny," Master Sgt. Harry Vancourt, disbursing agent, said.

The system automates what was essentially a paper-based system previously, Vancourt added.

Every new system also has its challenges. "The previous rotation did not have this system so when we trained with them, we learned their way of doing it. When we took over, we had to relearn everything," Vancourt said.

To assist with the transition to the new

system, DFAS sent a team from Indiana to teach the soldiers during the first month of operation.

"That was very successful and we got good support from them," Vancourt said. "We are still in touch with them and hope to maintain contact following our deployment."

Spc. Shannon Shaver, cashier, agreed. "The team from Indiana spent as much and sometimes more time on the job than we did. It seemed I would see the same people from Indiana in the morning still working with Master Sgt. Vancourt at midnight," she said.

In the beginning, soldiers running the cashier's window would close their windows at 5 p.m. and sometimes spend until midnight balancing their books with the new

system. Currently, it takes the same soldiers approximately 45 minutes to accomplish the same feat.

"We have come a long way. The (battalion's) soldiers are outstanding. They put in the hours necessary to learn their jobs without complaint and that has made my job a lot easier. They have fantastic attitudes," Vancourt said.

Among the challenges facing Vancourt, Shaver and the rest of the battalion is handling five different currencies and the daily exchange rates.

Along with the dollar, the detachment does conversions into Euros, Hungarian Forint, Croatian Kuna and the Bosnian Mark.

To accommodate soldiers at other locations, the battalion sends teams out to all the forward operating bases weekly and maintains permanent teams in Sarajevo and Taszar, Hungary.

"We have no other reason to be here than to support the soldier," Vancourt said. "If that's not happening, there's a problem. We need to go where the soldiers are and do everything we can to use our resources to assist them."



A safe containing currency exchange stands ready for use.



# Tuzla Night Owl



The Best Source of Local [Translated] News in the Balkans

Story By **Nedima Hadziibrisevic**  
*Media Specialist*

Nearly every person attempts to stay informed with the latest developments in their respective surroundings. Back in the United States, the easiest thing to do is to pick up a newspaper or watch CNN to become acquainted with up-to-date headlines. However, while deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina soldiers encounter a major obstacle, a language barrier.

The Open Source Intelligence operating team under the Multinational Brigade (North) ensures those soldiers are constantly up-to-date with the current events in theater. Dusko Jovicic, OSINT media analyst, said that they try to provide a daily dose of news for the brigade's soldiers.

"We would like to provide a snap shot of daily news so that soldiers can be informed about their surroundings and to be able to support their mission," Jovicic said.

OSINT is well known for its daily publication, the Tuzla Night Owl, that offers an array of translated local news not only concentrating on Bosnian media but on neighboring countries as well.

"We try to capture each of the various media sources on a daily basis: print, TV and radio," added Jovicic. "We put them together in one product, which we send out daily, so that our various consumers can be better informed about the situation in BiH."

The Night Owl was first published in April 1996 and contained about 10 articles due to limited local media sources. However, through the years the Night Owl evolved to be one of the most comprehensive sources of local translated news with

approximately 80 articles per day.

Providing this news could not happen without the critical services of the Northrop Grumman translators, monitoring about 40 different media outlets at their offices at Camp McGovern, Camp Doboj, Forward Operating Base Camp Connor and Eagle Base's main office.

The interpreters come from different ethnic backgrounds and possess a thorough knowledge of the

experience working with the U.S. Soldiers.

His colleague and OSINT translator, Ankica Cvjetic, a student at Tuzla University, majoring in English, stressed there is a casual atmosphere and a good relationship between the OSINT staff.

"We work as a team," she added. "That is the most important thing."

Some of the difficulties linguists encounter during their translations are the long sentences journalists use in their stories, which they frequently break down into several segments to make it easier for readers to understand.

"Sentences with 15 commas, that is the difficulty with this job," Marjanovic said.

In addition to Stabilization Forces 14 personnel and various high-ranking commanders and international organizations, Tuzla Night Owl also is disseminated to the incoming SFOR rotations prior to their deployment. This provides them insight into the country's present situation and gives them a better understanding of Bosnia.

"First of all it is very important for them to understand where they are coming so they know what to expect when they go outside the wire. Hopefully it helps them to understand the political and social situation in the country so they can communicate with

people better," said Cvjetic. OSINT's goal is to have as many people reading the publication as possible. Any suggestions, changes or additions that would contribute to this are more than welcomed.

The Night Owl can be accessed at Task Force Eagle home page, [www.tfeagle.army.mil](http://www.tfeagle.army.mil).



Photo by Spc. Jeremiah Wickenhauser 135th MPAD  
Dusko Jovicic scans a daily newspaper with Ankica Cvjetic at the Night owl office on Eagle Base.

local media in their respective areas. Jovicic stressed that the strength of the section rests with the interpreters.

In addition to translation, they are also engaged in choosing specific articles depending on their supervisor's guidance.

"We have some guidelines on what to follow and what to look for," said Benko Marjanovic, an OSINT translator with over five years

 **In our sights** 



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 135th MPAD

Staff Sgt. Zena Hamilton, TF Med Eagle, (left), Spc. Curtis Condon, TF Bearcat, and Spc. Jessica Johnson, JMA, were among the Gospel Choir members singing during the Inter-Faith Thanksgiving Service at Eagle Chapel.



Photo by Chief Warrant Officer Daniel McGowan, 434th FLE

Capt. Angela Ellefson, 634th MI Bn., leads several runners, including Staff Sgt. Colin Jacobson, 34th ID HHC, (right) during the 5-kilometer Turkey Trot Sunday.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 135th MPAD

Vermont Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Martha Rainville, (center) is escorted by 86th Med. Co. (AA) pilot Chief Warrant Officer Philip Small and 1st Sgt. Chester Welch to a TF Med Eagle exercise site near the East Gate Saturday.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood, 135th MPAD

Sgt. Brian Betto, (left), Spc. Nathan Anderson, Spc. Nathan Johnson and Spc. Jacob Barker were among the TF Bearcat soldiers presented the NATO Non-Article 5 Medal by MNB (N) Commander Brig. Gen. Richard Nash, Nov. 22, at FOB Connor.